

We Were Warned About USAID: Perkins, Chomsky, Agee, Assange, Golinger, Snowden, et alia

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February 9, 2025

For decades, whistleblowers, investigative journalists, and former intelligence insiders have exposed the hidden role of USAID as more than just a humanitarian agency. Figures such as John Perkins, Noam Chomsky, Philip Agee, Julian Assange, Eva Golinger, and Edward Snowden have presented compelling evidence that USAID has long served as a covert instrument of U.S. foreign policy, intelligence operations, and economic manipulation. While publicly promoting democracy and development, USAID has been repeatedly implicated in political interference, regime change efforts, economic coercion, and surveillance programs. From funding opposition movements in Venezuela and Ukraine to digital influence campaigns in Cuba and Iran, USAID has consistently acted in alignment with CIA, NSA, and State Department agendas. Despite multiple exposés, the media and political establishment have downplayed or ignored these warnings, allowing USAID to continue operating with impunity. This paper examines the mounting evidence that USAID is not a neutral aid organization but a strategic tool of U.S. hegemony, reinforcing global dominance under the pretense of economic and humanitarian assistance.

Keywords: USAID, CIA, intelligence operations, regime change, political interference, economic coercion, John Perkins, Noam Chomsky, Philip Agee, Julian Assange, Eva Golinger, Edward Snowden, digital influence, surveillance, National Endowment for Democracy, foreign aid, humanitarian cover, democracy promotion, psychological warfare, destabilization, propaganda, cyber warfare, neoliberalism, soft power, global dominance, economic manipulation, proxy conflicts, NGOs, social media subversion, hybrid warfare, covert operations, U.S. imperialism. Note: Verbatim GPT-4o. 59 pages.

I. Introduction

The United States Agency for International Development (USAID) was established in 1961 under President John F. Kennedy's administration, with the stated mission of promoting economic development, humanitarian assistance, and democratic governance worldwide. According to its official mandate, USAID seeks to advance global stability and prosperity by addressing poverty, disease, and political instability. It claims to operate as a neutral, benevolent institution committed to the betterment of developing nations through foreign aid and technical assistance. This mission has enabled USAID to establish a presence in over 100 countries, funding projects in health, education, infrastructure, and political reform.

However, from the outset, critics have argued that USAID functions as far more than a humanitarian organization. Persistent allegations suggest that USAID has served as a covert extension of U.S. intelligence agencies—primarily the CIA—helping to execute foreign policy objectives under the guise of economic assistance. Many argue that its funding programs have been weaponized to destabilize governments, interfere in domestic politics, and facilitate regime changes beneficial to U.S. strategic interests. The pattern of USAID's involvement in politically charged initiatives, such as backing opposition movements, financing media propaganda, and providing cover for intelligence operatives, has led to widespread skepticism about its true role in international affairs.

Key Figures Who Have Warned Us

Numerous whistleblowers, investigative journalists, and political theorists have warned about the true nature of USAID's activities. Among them:

- John Perkins – In *Confessions of an Economic Hit Man*, Perkins described USAID as an economic tool for indebting developing nations, forcing them into financial dependence on U.S. corporations and institutions like the International Monetary Fund (IMF) and the World Bank. He detailed how loans and aid packages were often structured to benefit U.S. corporate and military interests rather than the local populations they were supposed to help.

- Noam Chomsky – A lifelong critic of U.S. foreign policy, Chomsky has extensively documented USAID’s role in promoting neoliberal economic policies that serve American economic interests rather than the welfare of recipient nations. He argues that USAID, alongside institutions like the National Endowment for Democracy (NED), functions as a front for U.S. geopolitical influence.
- Philip Agee – A former CIA officer, Agee exposed how USAID has been used as a cover for intelligence operations. In *Inside the Company: CIA Diary*, he provided firsthand accounts of how the CIA leveraged USAID’s infrastructure to infiltrate foreign governments and carry out subversive operations, particularly in Latin America.
- Julian Assange & WikiLeaks – Leaked diplomatic cables and reports from WikiLeaks have provided undeniable proof that USAID has funded political opposition movements in multiple countries, including Venezuela, Cuba, and Ukraine. Assange’s exposure of covert U.S. operations has solidified claims that USAID is not a neutral aid organization but a vehicle for clandestine political influence.
- Eva Golinger – As an investigative journalist, Golinger has extensively documented USAID’s involvement in destabilizing governments in Latin America, particularly in Venezuela. Her research revealed how USAID funneled money into opposition groups to undermine Hugo Chávez’s administration, often coordinating with other U.S. agencies and organizations like NED.
- Edward Snowden – While Snowden’s primary revelations were about NSA surveillance, his leaks also shed light on the broader intelligence community’s operations, including how digital “democracy promotion” initiatives funded by USAID were tied to intelligence gathering and online influence campaigns.

These figures, along with various investigative journalists, political analysts, and foreign governments, have repeatedly warned that USAID is not merely an aid organization but an instrument of U.S. statecraft, used to exert control over sovereign nations.

Thesis: The Warnings Have Been Ignored

Despite the overwhelming evidence presented by these individuals, USAID has largely maintained its public image as a humanitarian organization. The U.S. government, mainstream media, and policy circles continue to downplay or outright dismiss claims of USAID's involvement in covert intelligence activities. Those who expose these activities are often discredited, marginalized, or even persecuted. Meanwhile, new reports and leaks continue to emerge, reinforcing the very claims that have been ignored for decades.

This paper will examine the historical and contemporary evidence of USAID's operations, analyzing how the warnings from Perkins, Chomsky, Agee, Assange, Golinger, Snowden, and others were disregarded—despite the fact that the agency's actions have repeatedly validated their critiques. As recent developments confirm the longstanding suspicions about USAID's role in global political manipulation, we must ask: If we had heeded these warnings earlier, could we have mitigated the damage caused by its covert activities? And more importantly, what can be done now to hold USAID accountable?

II. USAID's Origins and Its Links to the CIA

Historical Background: The Founding of USAID Under the Kennedy Administration

The United States Agency for International Development (USAID) was officially established on November 3, 1961, through an executive order by President John F. Kennedy. The agency was created under the Foreign Assistance Act of 1961, which sought to consolidate multiple U.S. foreign aid programs into a single entity aimed at promoting economic development, humanitarian relief, and democratic governance worldwide. At the time, Kennedy framed USAID as a moral and strategic imperative, stating that development assistance was crucial for combating global poverty, fostering stability, and countering the influence of communism.

However, from its inception, USAID was embedded within the larger framework of Cold War geopolitics. The agency was designed not just to alleviate economic hardships abroad but to serve as a critical instrument of U.S. foreign policy,

particularly in preventing the spread of Soviet and communist influence in developing nations. The Kennedy administration, deeply invested in countering leftist movements across Latin America, Africa, and Asia, envisioned USAID as a means of extending American soft power. However, declassified documents and testimonies from former officials suggest that the agency's role went far beyond its stated humanitarian mission—it was frequently leveraged as an operational front for the Central Intelligence Agency (CIA).

The Cold War Context: USAID as a Tool for Soft Power and CIA Operations

During the Cold War, U.S. intelligence agencies sought to expand their global reach by embedding operatives within non-military organizations. USAID, with its extensive network of field offices and aid programs, provided an ideal cover for intelligence operations. The agency's presence in politically volatile regions made it a convenient vehicle for advancing U.S. strategic interests, often under the guise of economic assistance and democratization efforts.

Key elements of USAID's Cold War role included:

1. **Providing Cover for CIA Operatives:**
USAID offices became staging grounds for CIA personnel operating under diplomatic or aid-related cover. These operatives used USAID's infrastructure to cultivate informants, influence local leaders, and collect intelligence.
2. **Funding Counterinsurgency Efforts:**
USAID played a direct role in supporting U.S.-backed governments against communist insurgencies. Through various aid programs, the agency funneled resources to military regimes, police forces, and counterinsurgency operations that aligned with U.S. interests.
3. **Engineering Regime Change:**
USAID-funded projects frequently targeted opposition groups hostile to U.S.-backed regimes. Through financial and logistical support, the agency helped orchestrate electoral interference and economic destabilization campaigns against leftist or nationalist governments.

4. Promoting Neoliberal Economic Policies:

As part of its development agenda, USAID imposed neoliberal economic policies that favored U.S. corporate interests. These policies often included privatization, deregulation, and structural adjustment programs that benefited multinational corporations at the expense of local economies.

Notable Early Examples of USAID's Intelligence Role

1. USAID's Role in Latin America's Counterinsurgency Programs

Latin America became a major focus of U.S. foreign policy during the 1960s and 1970s, as socialist and nationalist movements gained traction throughout the region. USAID was heavily involved in counterinsurgency programs aimed at suppressing these movements and maintaining U.S.-aligned regimes.

- El Salvador (1960s-1980s): USAID provided funding and training for the Salvadoran security forces, which were notorious for human rights abuses. The agency's development projects were often tied to counterinsurgency efforts, ensuring that aid flowed primarily to government-controlled areas while opposition-held regions remained economically isolated.
 - Guatemala (1966-1980s): USAID's Office of Public Safety (OPS) played a key role in training Guatemalan police and military forces, many of whom were later implicated in political assassinations and torture. The agency's funding was linked to U.S. efforts to suppress leftist guerrilla movements.
 - Chile (1960s-1973): Under the guise of economic development, USAID provided financial assistance to opposition groups seeking to undermine President Salvador Allende's socialist government. Declassified documents reveal that USAID helped channel funds to anti-Allende media outlets and political organizations, setting the stage for the 1973 coup that installed the U.S.-backed military dictatorship of Augusto Pinochet.
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2. Allegations of USAID Funding Opposition Groups in Various Countries

Beyond Latin America, USAID has been accused of funding opposition movements in several countries where U.S. interests were at stake.

- Cuba (ZunZuneo Scandal, 2010s): USAID secretly developed *ZunZuneo*, a fake social media platform designed to incite anti-government protests in Cuba. The program was eventually exposed, revealing USAID's covert efforts to stir dissent under the pretext of digital democracy promotion.
- Venezuela (2000s-Present): Investigative journalist Eva Golinger uncovered documents showing that USAID funneled millions of dollars to opposition groups attempting to overthrow Hugo Chávez's government. The agency funded political parties, NGOs, and media organizations that actively worked to destabilize the Venezuelan government.
- Ukraine (2014-Present): USAID played a role in funding pro-Western political movements during the 2014 Euromaidan protests, which led to the ousting of President Viktor Yanukovich. While officially framed as democracy-building, USAID's involvement in the political transformation of Ukraine aligned closely with broader U.S. geopolitical goals.

Conclusion: The Hidden Role of USAID in U.S. Foreign Policy

From its inception, USAID has operated within a dual framework: publicly promoting humanitarian aid while covertly advancing U.S. intelligence and foreign policy interests. Whether through funding counterinsurgency programs, providing cover for CIA operations, or financing political opposition movements, USAID has consistently functioned as a key instrument of U.S. global strategy. While its public image remains that of a benevolent aid organization, historical evidence and declassified documents suggest that USAID's true function has been far more insidious—serving as a crucial arm of American interventionism disguised under the banner of development assistance.

As we examine the warnings from figures like Perkins, Chomsky, Agee, Assange, Golinger, and Snowden, it becomes evident that USAID's activities have been neither accidental nor incidental. Rather, they have been part of a long-standing

pattern of covert operations that continue to shape global politics. The next sections will explore how these warnings, if heeded, could have exposed the agency's true nature much earlier and potentially prevented the damage caused by its covert actions worldwide.

III. John Perkins: Economic Hit Men and the Role of USAID

John Perkins, a former economic consultant and self-described “economic hit man,” exposed the hidden mechanisms of global financial exploitation in his book, *Confessions of an Economic Hit Man* (2004). Perkins detailed how international financial institutions, U.S. government agencies—including USAID—and multinational corporations collaborated to manipulate developing nations into economic dependency. His firsthand accounts illustrate how USAID played a crucial role in indebting foreign governments, securing access to their natural resources, and ensuring political alignment with U.S. interests.

According to Perkins, USAID was a key instrument in a larger scheme designed to benefit U.S. corporations, the defense industry, and intelligence agencies under the guise of economic development. Rather than lifting nations out of poverty, USAID's aid programs were structured to entrench U.S. economic dominance, often at the cost of the recipient country's sovereignty and financial stability.

Key Claims from *Confessions of an Economic Hit Man*

1. USAID's Function in Indebting Nations to Control Their Policies

Perkins describes a systematic process by which U.S. financial institutions, in collaboration with USAID, would entice developing nations to accept massive loans for infrastructure projects they often did not need or could not afford. The loans, provided by institutions such as the International Monetary Fund (IMF) and the World Bank, were framed as economic development assistance but were, in reality, designed to ensure long-term dependence on U.S. interests. The key features of this strategy included:

- **Overinflated Economic Projections:** Development economists working for U.S. firms—often contracted by USAID—would deliberately exaggerate the

economic benefits of massive infrastructure projects. This misrepresentation convinced foreign leaders to accept loans that would later prove unsustainable.

- **Loans Tied to U.S. Contractors:** The financing provided to these countries came with strings attached—contracts were awarded exclusively to U.S. firms such as Bechtel, Halliburton, and other multinational corporations. As a result, the money rarely benefited the local economy but instead flowed back into American corporate hands.
- **Debt as a Tool for Political Leverage:** Once a nation was burdened with unpayable debt, U.S. officials would leverage financial hardship to extract political concessions. These could include access to natural resources, favorable trade agreements, military cooperation, or strategic geopolitical alignments.

The goal was not to help developing nations achieve financial independence but to create an economic environment in which they had little choice but to comply with U.S. directives. Perkins argues that USAID, alongside the IMF and World Bank, was instrumental in executing this strategy across multiple continents.

2. How Infrastructure Projects Benefited U.S. Corporations and Military Strategy

Rather than being designed for genuine economic upliftment, the projects USAID facilitated often served the interests of U.S. multinational corporations and, indirectly, the military-industrial complex. Perkins highlights the following ways in which these projects primarily benefited American elites:

- **Infrastructure Designed for Corporate Profitability:** Roads, ports, and energy projects were built not to serve local populations but to facilitate the extraction and exportation of natural resources by Western companies. For example, in oil-rich countries, USAID-backed projects focused on pipeline construction, benefiting U.S. energy giants rather than local consumers.
- **Tying Nations to U.S. Military Interests:** Many infrastructure projects had dual purposes, serving both economic and military needs. Airfields,

highways, and telecommunications networks were often structured in a way that could be easily repurposed for U.S. military use in times of conflict or geopolitical tension.

- **Encouraging Privatization and Foreign Ownership:** As part of its "development" programs, USAID often pushed for the privatization of key industries, allowing U.S. corporations to acquire formerly state-owned enterprises at a fraction of their value. This shift eroded national sovereignty and placed vital resources under foreign control.

Case Studies: USAID's Role in Economic Manipulation

Perkins provides several real-world examples of how USAID was used as a vehicle for economic coercion. Three particularly illustrative cases are Ecuador, Panama, and Indonesia.

Case Study 1: Ecuador – Oil, Debt, and the Erosion of Sovereignty

In the 1970s, Ecuador was identified as a prime target for the economic hit man strategy due to its vast oil reserves. USAID played a crucial role in laying the groundwork for a debt-trap scenario that would ultimately force the country into submission.

- **The USAID-Orchestrated Loan Cycle:**
Ecuador was encouraged to take massive loans from the World Bank and IMF, backed by feasibility studies and projections that vastly overstated future oil revenues. USAID helped facilitate these deals under the pretext of fostering economic development.
- **Infrastructure for U.S. Oil Companies:**
Much of the borrowed money was funneled into building highways, pipelines, and electric grids—projects that disproportionately benefited foreign oil companies operating in Ecuador. Local populations saw little direct benefit from these investments.
- **Debt as a Political Weapon:**
When oil prices dropped, Ecuador found itself unable to meet its debt obligations. The U.S. government, through institutions like USAID,

leveraged this crisis to demand structural adjustments that included slashing social programs, opening markets to foreign investors, and granting U.S. companies greater access to Ecuador's resources.

The result was a classic case of economic coercion: Ecuador remained financially dependent on the United States, while its oil industry was increasingly controlled by American energy corporations.

Case Study 2: Panama – The Prelude to U.S. Military Intervention

During the 1970s and 1980s, Panama was another major target of USAID-backed economic manipulation. Perkins recounts how Manuel Noriega, once a U.S. ally, became a victim of this system when he refused to comply with American demands.

- **USAID's Economic Entrapment:**
Panama accepted large-scale development loans, many of which were structured to benefit U.S. companies involved in the expansion of the Panama Canal and related infrastructure.
 - **The Shift to Political Pressure:**
When Noriega began asserting Panama's sovereignty—particularly by refusing to allow continued U.S. military presence—economic hit men like Perkins, along with agencies like USAID, intensified financial pressure.
 - **Economic Warfare Preceding Military Invasion:**
When economic coercion failed, the U.S. turned to military intervention. In 1989, the U.S. invaded Panama under Operation Just Cause, citing Noriega's alleged drug trafficking as justification. However, the real motive was to secure continued control over the Panama Canal and ensure U.S. dominance in the region.
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Case Study 3: Indonesia – Infrastructure and Dictatorship

In the aftermath of the 1965 CIA-backed coup that overthrew President Sukarno and installed General Suharto, Indonesia became another testing ground for USAID's economic influence.

- **Aid as a Tool for Neoliberal Reform:**
USAID poured money into the country to support the new pro-U.S. regime. However, the aid was conditioned on implementing neoliberal policies that opened Indonesia's economy to Western corporate exploitation.
- **Privatization and Resource Extraction:**
Under USAID-backed economic programs, Indonesia's vast natural resources—including oil, gas, and timber—were increasingly controlled by foreign multinational corporations. Infrastructure projects funded by U.S. loans facilitated resource extraction but did little to improve the livelihoods of ordinary Indonesians.
- **Repression and Economic Dependence:**
Suharto's brutal rule ensured compliance with U.S. economic directives, but at the cost of widespread human rights abuses. USAID-backed policies prioritized foreign investment and industrial projects, often displacing indigenous communities and exacerbating inequality.

Conclusion: USAID as an Instrument of Economic Subjugation

Perkins' revelations in *Confessions of an Economic Hit Man* provide damning evidence that USAID was never merely an aid agency. Rather, it functioned as a covert economic weapon, entangling nations in debt, enforcing policies that favored U.S. corporations, and paving the way for military intervention when economic coercion failed. By examining cases such as Ecuador, Panama, and Indonesia, it becomes clear that USAID's development programs often served as Trojan horses for deeper strategic objectives.

Perkins' work, alongside the findings of Chomsky, Agee, Assange, Golinger, and Snowden, reinforces a crucial point: the warnings about USAID's true role have been consistent and well-documented. Yet, the agency continues to operate

under the façade of humanitarian assistance, perpetuating cycles of economic dependency and geopolitical control.

IV. Noam Chomsky: USAID as a Tool of U.S. Imperialism

Noam Chomsky, one of the most outspoken critics of U.S. foreign policy, has long argued that USAID is not an independent humanitarian organization but a strategic instrument of American imperialism. Chomsky views USAID as a key player in enforcing neoliberal economic policies and maintaining U.S. hegemony under the pretense of international development assistance. His critiques align closely with those of other investigative analysts and whistleblowers who have exposed how USAID serves as a front for economic and political control, rather than genuine humanitarian aid.

Chomsky's Criticism of USAID

Chomsky has consistently exposed USAID's role in advancing Washington's geopolitical objectives, arguing that the agency is not primarily concerned with alleviating poverty or promoting democracy. Instead, it serves to:

- **Propagate Neoliberal Economic Policies:** USAID's development programs frequently push for deregulation, privatization, and structural adjustments that prioritize corporate interests over local economies.
- **Fund Opposition Movements and Political Instability:** The agency has a well-documented history of financing opposition groups that align with U.S. foreign policy goals, especially in regions where socialist or nationalist governments challenge U.S. economic dominance.
- **Strengthen U.S. Corporate Control Over Natural Resources:** USAID-backed projects often facilitate the extraction of valuable natural resources—such as oil, gas, and minerals—by multinational corporations.
- **Support Military and Political Elites:** USAID frequently works with authoritarian governments that serve U.S. interests while sidelining

grassroots movements advocating for genuine democracy and economic self-sufficiency.

According to Chomsky, these tactics have been employed repeatedly in Latin America, Southeast Asia, and the Middle East, where USAID has played a central role in advancing U.S. imperial designs under the banner of economic assistance.

How USAID Promotes Neoliberal Policies Under the Guise of Development Aid

One of Chomsky's key arguments is that USAID's "aid" programs are primarily designed to serve U.S. corporate and financial interests, rather than the well-being of recipient nations. He emphasizes that USAID's economic assistance is rarely about fostering local self-sufficiency and is instead tied to rigid conditions that force countries into adopting policies favorable to U.S. economic elites. These policies typically include:

1. Privatization of Public Services:

- USAID-backed reforms often require recipient nations to sell off state-owned enterprises, leading to the takeover of key industries—such as energy, water, and healthcare—by foreign corporations.
- The resulting private monopolies prioritize profit over public welfare, often raising prices and reducing access to essential services for local populations.

2. Deregulation of Markets and Trade Liberalization:

- USAID promotes free-market policies that remove protections for local industries, making them vulnerable to competition from more powerful U.S. and Western corporations.
- This leads to the collapse of domestic businesses, increased unemployment, and economic dependency on foreign imports.

3. Debt as a Mechanism for Control:

- Countries receiving USAID assistance are often pushed into borrowing from the World Bank and IMF, leading to long-term debt obligations that limit their economic sovereignty.

- These debts are then used as leverage to dictate domestic policies, preventing nations from pursuing independent economic strategies.

4. Structural Adjustment Programs (SAPs):

- Many USAID initiatives are tied to IMF-imposed structural adjustment programs, which demand austerity measures, cuts to social services, and the elimination of subsidies for food, healthcare, and education.
- While these policies benefit multinational corporations and financial institutions, they frequently devastate local populations, leading to increased poverty and social unrest.

Chomsky has illustrated how these policies have been systematically implemented in different parts of the world, often leading to economic crises, political instability, and deep resentment toward the U.S.

Evidence from Latin America, Southeast Asia, and the Middle East

Chomsky has provided detailed analyses of USAID's actions across multiple regions, showing how its so-called development efforts have consistently aligned with U.S. geopolitical interests.

1. Latin America: USAID's Role in Economic and Political Manipulation

- In Nicaragua, USAID played a critical role in undermining the leftist Sandinista government by funding opposition media, political parties, and economic destabilization efforts. This was part of a broader U.S. strategy to crush socialist movements in Central America.
- In El Salvador, USAID supported counterinsurgency efforts by funding government-aligned paramilitary forces, many of which were implicated in human rights abuses.
- In Honduras, USAID-backed programs helped establish a military-dominated government that aligned with U.S. Cold War interests, leading to decades of authoritarian rule.

2. Southeast Asia: USAID as a Counterinsurgency Tool

- In Vietnam, USAID was instrumental in supporting the U.S. war effort, funding "development projects" that served as counterinsurgency operations against the Viet Cong.
- In Indonesia, after the CIA-backed coup that installed General Suharto in 1965, USAID helped design economic policies that opened the country's vast natural resources to U.S. and Western corporations while crushing socialist movements.

3. The Middle East: USAID's Role in Economic and Political Engineering

- In Iraq, following the 2003 U.S. invasion, USAID was heavily involved in restructuring the country's economy, implementing neoliberal policies that led to the privatization of state-owned industries and the dominance of Western corporations in Iraq's oil sector.
- In Egypt, USAID provided financial backing to pro-U.S. political factions while conditioning aid on policies that benefited American corporate interests at the expense of Egyptian workers and farmers.

Example: The Role of USAID in Shaping Post-Coup Chile Under Pinochet

Perhaps one of the most damning examples of USAID's role in enforcing U.S. imperial policy is its involvement in Chile after the 1973 coup that overthrew democratically elected socialist President Salvador Allende and installed the military dictatorship of General Augusto Pinochet.

1. USAID's Pre-Coup Destabilization Efforts:

- Under President Nixon's directive to "make the Chilean economy scream," USAID played a direct role in funding opposition groups, conservative media, and business elites to create economic instability.
- Declassified U.S. government documents show that USAID helped funnel millions of dollars to anti-Allende forces, assisting in efforts to undermine the Chilean economy and provoke social unrest.

2. Post-Coup Economic Restructuring Under USAID Guidance:

- After Pinochet seized power, USAID worked alongside the IMF, the World Bank, and the "Chicago Boys" (U.S.-trained economists) to impose radical free-market reforms.
- These reforms included the mass privatization of industries, the elimination of labor protections, and the reduction of public services—all of which disproportionately benefited U.S. corporations.

3. Repression and Economic Control:

- While Pinochet's regime carried out mass human rights violations—including torture, disappearances, and extrajudicial killings—USAID continued to provide financial and logistical support.
- The result was a devastating economic model that enriched foreign investors while deepening poverty and inequality for the majority of Chileans.

Chomsky has often cited Chile as a textbook case of how USAID and other U.S. institutions collaborate to dismantle independent economic policies, replace them with neoliberal models, and uphold authoritarian regimes that align with American interests.

Conclusion: USAID as a Pillar of U.S. Global Hegemony

Chomsky's critique of USAID reveals a pattern that is not accidental but systemic—USAID is a tool of U.S. imperialism, designed to enforce economic dependency, manipulate political systems, and ensure American corporate and military dominance. While its public mission emphasizes humanitarian aid and development, its true function aligns with a broader strategy of economic subjugation and political control.

As this paper continues to explore the perspectives of other whistleblowers and analysts, it becomes increasingly evident that USAID is not a neutral force for good but an agency deeply embedded in the machinery of global power.

Chomsky's work, alongside revelations from figures like John Perkins, Philip Agee,

Julian Assange, Eva Golinger, and Edward Snowden, offers a stark warning: the United States' aid programs are often weapons disguised as benevolence, and USAID is among the most effective instruments in this arsenal.

V. Philip Agee: The CIA's Man on the Inside Speaks Out

Philip Agee, a former CIA officer, became one of the most controversial whistleblowers in U.S. intelligence history when he published *Inside the Company: CIA Diary* in 1975. His book provided an unprecedented, firsthand account of how the CIA operated under the guise of foreign aid, diplomacy, and economic development to manipulate politics and maintain U.S. dominance in Latin America. One of Agee's most damning revelations was how USAID functioned as a front for CIA operations, allowing intelligence officers to embed themselves within "development programs" to influence elections, destabilize governments, and carry out covert actions.

Unlike other critics who observed USAID's role from an external perspective, Agee had direct knowledge of how the agency worked in concert with the CIA. His exposure of these activities led to severe retaliation from the U.S. government, including passport revocation and relentless efforts to discredit him. However, the patterns he described—particularly USAID's involvement in subversion—have since been corroborated by declassified documents, further confirming that his warnings were well-founded.

Revelations from *Inside the Company: CIA Diary*

Agee's *Inside the Company* was one of the first comprehensive accounts of CIA operations in Latin America. The book meticulously documented the intelligence tactics used to infiltrate and manipulate foreign governments, often under the cover of USAID and other "humanitarian" organizations. His revelations included:

1. How USAID Provided Cover for CIA Operatives
 - Many CIA officers were assigned diplomatic postings at U.S. embassies under the guise of working for USAID or similar agencies.

- These operatives carried out espionage, cultivated local informants, and influenced political leaders—all while maintaining the public pretense of aiding economic development.
- USAID's presence in volatile regions provided an ideal structure for intelligence gathering without arousing suspicion.

2. The Use of USAID as a Covert Funding Mechanism

- Agee detailed how USAID programs served as conduits for secretly funneling money to opposition groups, right-wing paramilitary forces, and compliant politicians.
- Through grant programs and aid initiatives, funds were redirected to organizations that aligned with U.S. geopolitical interests.

3. USAID's Role in Manipulating Elections

- USAID's development projects often had a dual purpose: while ostensibly assisting local economies, they were strategically designed to bolster political parties and leaders who served U.S. interests.
- In many cases, USAID-backed programs provided jobs and economic incentives to populations in regions that supported pro-U.S. candidates, ensuring voter loyalty.

4. Collaboration Between USAID, the CIA, and Local Security Forces

- Agee revealed that USAID frequently worked in tandem with local police and military forces to suppress leftist movements and prevent the rise of anti-U.S. governments.
- Training programs for security forces—allegedly for maintaining law and order—often included tactics for counterinsurgency, political repression, and intelligence-gathering against dissidents.

Agee's revelations painted a disturbing picture: USAID was not simply a development agency but an integral part of U.S. intelligence operations abroad.

Agee's Firsthand Account of How USAID Was Used as a Cover for Espionage

While stationed in Ecuador, Agee observed firsthand how the CIA exploited USAID programs to influence the country's political landscape. His experiences provide concrete examples of how aid organizations were routinely co-opted for intelligence purposes.

1. The Case of Ecuador: A Model for Political Manipulation

- **USAID's Involvement in Ecuador's Political Affairs:**
Agee detailed how USAID was instrumental in shaping Ecuador's political system by providing financial support to pro-U.S. political parties.
 - One of its main strategies was funding local civic organizations and trade unions that opposed leftist parties, effectively engineering a political climate favorable to Washington.
 - **Bribing and Recruiting Politicians:**
 - USAID programs created avenues for CIA operatives to make contact with and recruit politicians, offering them financial incentives to align with U.S. interests.
 - In some cases, U.S. intelligence assets within Ecuador's government were given access to USAID resources to consolidate their power.
 - **Economic Pressure as a Tool for Control:**
 - When Ecuador's government took positions that conflicted with U.S. economic interests, USAID-backed development projects were stalled or withdrawn as a form of economic coercion.
 - The strategy was simple: cooperate with U.S. directives, and development aid would flow; resist, and the country would face economic hardships.
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The CIA's Infiltration of Aid Organizations to Influence Foreign Politics

Agee's insights extend beyond Ecuador, demonstrating that USAID was a crucial tool for covert U.S. intervention across Latin America. He documented similar patterns in other countries, where aid programs served as intelligence fronts:

2. The Dominican Republic: USAID's Role in Electoral Manipulation

- In the 1960s, after the CIA-backed assassination of Rafael Trujillo, USAID was deployed to help control the post-Trujillo political landscape.
- The agency funded media outlets, opposition groups, and "democracy promotion" initiatives, all of which were designed to ensure that a U.S.-friendly government emerged from the transition.

3. Chile: Pre-Coup Destabilization Efforts

- Before the 1973 coup against Salvador Allende, USAID helped fund opposition media and political parties to weaken the socialist government.
- The agency played a major role in an economic sabotage campaign that made Allende's governance increasingly difficult, paving the way for Pinochet's U.S.-backed dictatorship.

4. Uruguay: USAID's Role in Suppressing Leftist Movements

- USAID programs in Uruguay worked closely with local police to develop an intelligence network aimed at tracking and arresting leftist activists.
 - The funding for civic programs was often redirected toward counterinsurgency operations that targeted labor unions and political dissidents.
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The Consequences of Agee's Whistleblowing

Philip Agee's decision to expose these operations made him a target of intense persecution by the U.S. government. After publishing *Inside the Company*, he faced:

- Retaliation from the CIA:
 - Agee's passport was revoked, leaving him stateless for a period.
 - The CIA engaged in a campaign to discredit him, painting him as a traitor rather than a whistleblower.
- Surveillance and Harassment:
 - Agee was subjected to ongoing surveillance and pressure from U.S. intelligence agencies.
 - His later works were heavily censored, and his ability to travel was severely restricted.

Despite these efforts to silence him, Agee's revelations remain one of the most compelling pieces of evidence linking USAID to covert CIA operations. His accounts have since been validated by declassified government documents, confirming that the agency has long been used as an instrument of foreign political interference.

Conclusion: The Enduring Relevance of Agee's Revelations

Philip Agee's work exposed a fundamental truth: USAID, far from being a neutral development agency, has functioned as a critical arm of U.S. intelligence operations. His firsthand accounts from Ecuador and beyond provide a clear, well-documented record of how the agency was used to manipulate elections, suppress opposition movements, and secure U.S. corporate and military interests abroad.

More than four decades later, Agee's warnings remain highly relevant. The tactics he described have continued in different forms, from USAID's involvement in the Cuban ZunZuneo scandal to its funding of opposition groups in Venezuela and Ukraine.

As this paper continues to explore other critiques from figures like John Perkins, Noam Chomsky, Julian Assange, Eva Golinger, and Edward Snowden, a pattern emerges: USAID is not simply an aid organization, but a covert tool of empire, designed to maintain U.S. global dominance under the pretense of humanitarianism.

VI. Julian Assange and WikiLeaks: The Digital Proof

Julian Assange and WikiLeaks have played a crucial role in exposing USAID's covert operations, revealing that the agency has been used as a tool for U.S. intelligence and geopolitical interference. The leaks published by WikiLeaks provide irrefutable digital proof that USAID is not just an aid organization but an instrument of regime change, political subversion, and economic control.

Through diplomatic cables, classified reports, and internal communications, WikiLeaks has uncovered how USAID has been directly involved in funding opposition groups, orchestrating political destabilization, and coordinating with intelligence agencies to advance U.S. interests. These revelations confirm the warnings from whistleblowers like John Perkins, Philip Agee, Noam Chomsky, and Eva Golinger—USAID is deeply intertwined with U.S. foreign policy objectives, often at the expense of the nations it claims to help.

Key Leaks Exposing USAID's Activities

WikiLeaks has released numerous documents that expose how USAID has been actively engaged in covert operations aimed at destabilizing foreign governments. These revelations detail how USAID has funded opposition movements, influenced elections, and attempted to manipulate social and political structures in target nations.

1. USAID's Funding of Cuban Dissident Groups to Incite Unrest

One of the most damning revelations from WikiLeaks was USAID's involvement in covert operations to destabilize Cuba.

- ZunZuneo Scandal (2010s):
 - USAID secretly created a fake social media platform called *ZunZuneo*, designed to look like a Cuban version of Twitter.
 - The goal was to build a user base among young Cubans, then use the platform to spread anti-government propaganda and incite protests against the Cuban government.
 - The platform was funded through shell companies and front organizations to conceal U.S. government involvement.
- Funding of Anti-Castro Dissidents:
 - USAID funneled millions of dollars into Cuban opposition groups, providing training, resources, and communication tools to activists aiming to undermine the Cuban government.
 - Diplomatic cables revealed that USAID's operations in Cuba were coordinated with the State Department and U.S. intelligence agencies, indicating a broader strategy of regime change.

The exposure of these covert operations sparked outrage in Cuba and among international observers, demonstrating that USAID was actively engaged in espionage rather than humanitarian aid.

2. Documents Showing USAID Funding Opposition Parties in Venezuela and Bolivia

WikiLeaks released several classified U.S. diplomatic cables revealing that USAID had been deeply involved in funding and organizing opposition groups in Venezuela and Bolivia—two countries that had resisted U.S. economic and political influence.

- Venezuela: Undermining Hugo Chávez's Government
 - Investigative journalist Eva Golinger uncovered USAID's role in providing financial and logistical support to opposition groups attempting to overthrow Venezuelan President Hugo Chávez.

- WikiLeaks documents confirmed that USAID funded anti-Chávez media outlets and NGOs, disguised as "democracy promotion" efforts.
- The cables exposed how USAID worked alongside the National Endowment for Democracy (NED) and other U.S. organizations to destabilize the Venezuelan government.
- **Bolivia: Supporting Anti-Evo Morales Movements**
 - WikiLeaks documents showed that USAID provided millions of dollars to opposition groups working to undermine Evo Morales, Bolivia's first Indigenous president.
 - Morales himself denounced USAID's activities, accusing the agency of financing separatist movements and promoting civil unrest in Bolivia's resource-rich regions.
 - In 2013, Bolivia expelled USAID from the country, citing its interference in domestic political affairs.

These revelations provided concrete proof that USAID was not acting as a neutral aid agency but as a covert instrument of U.S. foreign policy, actively seeking to overthrow governments that challenged American interests.

The Connection to Regime Change Operations

Beyond funding opposition groups, WikiLeaks has exposed how USAID played a central role in orchestrating regime change operations in countries that resisted U.S. influence. These documents reveal that USAID was used in tandem with other U.S. government agencies to push political transitions that benefited American strategic goals.

3. USAID's Involvement in Post-Gaddafi Libya

After the NATO-led overthrow of Muammar Gaddafi in 2011, Libya descended into chaos. WikiLeaks documents show that USAID was deployed as part of the post-regime change strategy, assisting in restructuring Libya's political and economic systems to align with U.S. interests.

- Rebuilding Libya's Political Institutions:
 - USAID provided funding and training to pro-Western political factions, ensuring that U.S.-backed groups dominated Libya's post-Gaddafi government.
 - The agency funded new media outlets and civil society organizations that promoted narratives favorable to U.S. interests.
- Economic Restructuring for Corporate Exploitation:
 - USAID-backed programs helped facilitate the privatization of Libya's energy sector, allowing foreign corporations—particularly American and European firms—to gain access to Libya's vast oil reserves.
 - Leaked diplomatic cables revealed that the U.S. had plans to reshape Libya's economy in a way that would benefit Western businesses, using USAID's development programs as a cover for corporate expansion.

Rather than stabilizing Libya, these efforts led to ongoing civil war, factional violence, and economic collapse, demonstrating how USAID's post-regime change interventions often create long-term devastation rather than genuine development.

4. USAID's Role in Post-Maidan Ukraine (2014-Present)

One of the most significant regime change operations of the 21st century took place in Ukraine in 2014, when U.S.-backed protests led to the ousting of President Viktor Yanukovich. WikiLeaks documents confirm that USAID played a direct role in financing and coordinating pro-Western political forces before and after the Maidan protests.

- Funding Pro-Western Political Groups:
 - USAID provided extensive financial and logistical support to pro-Western NGOs, media outlets, and political activists who played a leading role in the 2014 Maidan uprising.

- The agency worked in collaboration with the National Endowment for Democracy (NED) and other U.S. government-funded organizations to engineer a political transition that would shift Ukraine away from Russian influence.
 - Shaping Ukraine's Post-Coup Government:
 - After Yanukovich was removed from power, USAID helped restructure Ukraine's political and economic landscape, ensuring that U.S.-aligned politicians and business interests gained control.
 - USAID-funded programs facilitated Ukraine's transition into Western economic and military alliances, including closer integration with NATO and the European Union.
 - Ukraine as a U.S. Proxy State:
 - WikiLeaks cables suggest that USAID's work in Ukraine was not about democracy but about positioning Ukraine as a geopolitical asset against Russia.
 - The USAID-backed transition directly contributed to the ongoing conflict between Ukraine and Russia, raising questions about whether the agency's so-called "development aid" was actually part of a larger strategy of war by proxy.
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Conclusion: WikiLeaks Proved the Critics Right

The digital proof uncovered by WikiLeaks confirms what whistleblowers like Philip Agee, John Perkins, Noam Chomsky, and Eva Golinger had long argued: USAID is not an aid agency—it is a covert tool of U.S. geopolitical power. Through leaked diplomatic cables and classified reports, WikiLeaks has irrefutably documented that USAID has been involved in:

1. Funding opposition movements to engineer political instability.
2. Providing cover for U.S. intelligence operations.
3. Facilitating regime change operations that benefit American corporate and military interests.

4. Restructuring economies post-regime change to serve Western investors.

These revelations demonstrate that USAID's primary function is not humanitarian aid but political manipulation and economic domination, often leading to long-term instability in the nations it targets.

As this paper continues to explore the warnings from other experts—including Edward Snowden's revelations about USAID's role in digital surveillance—it becomes increasingly clear that USAID is not just a "soft power" institution but an active participant in America's imperial ambitions.

VII. Eva Golinger: USAID's Meddling in Venezuela

Eva Golinger, an American-Venezuelan investigative journalist and lawyer, has been one of the foremost researchers exposing USAID's covert activities in Latin America, particularly in Venezuela. Through Freedom of Information Act (FOIA) requests and classified U.S. government documents, she has uncovered undeniable proof that USAID played a major role in destabilizing the Venezuelan government, specifically targeting former President Hugo Chávez and his successor Nicolás Maduro.

Golinger's work reveals that USAID was not merely an aid organization but a key player in U.S. attempts to engineer regime change in Venezuela. Her findings demonstrate that USAID, in coordination with the National Endowment for Democracy (NED), the State Department, and the CIA, funneled millions of dollars into opposition groups, media outlets, and political parties that worked to undermine Venezuela's socialist government.

Golinger's Investigative Work: Exposing USAID's Role in Undermining Chávez

Eva Golinger's research, detailed in her books *The Chávez Code: Cracking U.S. Intervention in Venezuela* and *Bush vs. Chávez: Washington's War on Venezuela*, provides substantial evidence that USAID actively funded, trained, and organized anti-Chávez forces in an effort to remove him from power.

1. USAID's Funding of Anti-Chávez Groups

One of Golinger's most explosive revelations was that USAID allocated millions of dollars to Venezuelan opposition groups through its Office of Transition Initiatives (OTI), a special USAID division known for working on political destabilization projects.

- The Creation of the Office of Transition Initiatives in Caracas (2002):
 - In response to Chávez's increasing resistance to U.S. policies, USAID established an OTI branch in Venezuela in 2002, just months before the attempted coup against Chávez in April of that year.
 - The timing of this office's establishment suggests that USAID was directly involved in planning and financing the coup attempt against Chávez.
 - After Chávez survived the coup, USAID continued its operations in Venezuela, working through NGOs and opposition networks to weaken his government.
- Millions Funneled to Opposition Groups:
 - USAID directly funded opposition parties, right-wing activists, and anti-Chávez NGOs, including Súmate, a U.S.-backed organization that played a leading role in the 2004 recall referendum against Chávez.
 - Between 2002 and 2010, over \$100 million was funneled to opposition groups under the guise of "democracy promotion."
 - USAID used front organizations such as the Pan-American Development Foundation (PADF) to distribute funds covertly and avoid direct traceability.
- Funding of Anti-Chávez Media Outlets:
 - USAID and NED provided financial support to opposition-controlled media, which played a significant role in the 2002 coup attempt by broadcasting false reports about Chávez's resignation to create public confusion.

- USAID-backed media outlets such as Globovisión and RCTV ran anti-Chávez propaganda, deliberately misrepresenting government actions to incite public unrest.
 - USAID's Involvement in the 2014 and 2017 Violent Protests:
 - Golinger's later investigations revealed that USAID-backed organizations provided logistical and financial support for violent street protests known as "guarimbas," aimed at destabilizing the Maduro government.
 - Opposition groups received U.S. funding to purchase weapons, organize street barricades, and coordinate civil unrest that resulted in dozens of deaths.
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2. Direct Links Between USAID and the National Endowment for Democracy (NED) in Venezuela

Golinger's research also exposes the close coordination between USAID and the National Endowment for Democracy (NED)—a U.S. government-funded organization notorious for supporting opposition movements in foreign countries.

- NED as a Parallel CIA:
 - The NED was created in 1983 as a way to carry out covert intelligence operations under the guise of "democracy promotion."
 - Former NED president Allen Weinstein openly admitted: "A lot of what we do today was done covertly 25 years ago by the CIA."
 - Since its inception, the NED has worked hand in hand with USAID, often sharing funding mechanisms, personnel, and strategic objectives.
- How NED and USAID Collaborated in Venezuela:
 - Documents obtained by Golinger show that USAID and NED had joint financial pipelines to fund the same opposition groups.

- USAID provided the bulk of funding for opposition political parties, while NED focused on "civic organizations" such as student groups and media networks.
- The two agencies coordinated their efforts to create a broad opposition coalition against Chávez, ensuring that U.S. influence penetrated multiple layers of Venezuelan society.
- Evidence from U.S. Government Documents:
 - Through FOIA requests, Golinger obtained internal U.S. documents proving that USAID and NED developed a long-term strategy to remove Chávez and implement a pro-U.S. government.
 - The documents outlined a five-phase plan for "democratic transition" in Venezuela, including economic destabilization, media control, civil society manipulation, and electoral interference.

These revelations make it clear that USAID was not an independent humanitarian agency in Venezuela—it was part of a coordinated regime change operation.

3. The Broader Pattern: How USAID Operates in Coordination with Other U.S. Intelligence Fronts

Golinger's findings on USAID's actions in Venezuela fit into a broader pattern of U.S. interventionism, in which USAID works alongside other intelligence fronts to subvert foreign governments.

- Collaboration with the CIA and State Department:
 - Many USAID field offices act as de facto CIA extensions, housing intelligence operatives who work under diplomatic cover.
 - In Venezuela, leaked documents revealed that USAID personnel were in regular contact with State Department officials and U.S. intelligence officers, discussing ways to weaken Chávez's influence.

- Economic Warfare Through USAID-Backed Programs:
 - Similar to what happened in Chile before the 1973 coup against Salvador Allende, USAID engaged in economic warfare to weaken Venezuela's economy.
 - USAID-backed financial institutions manipulated currency exchange rates, while opposition-led business groups orchestrated artificial shortages of food and medicine to create public discontent.
- Use of "Democracy Promotion" as a Cover for Political Interference:
 - USAID repeatedly claims to support "civil society organizations," but in reality, these organizations serve as extensions of U.S. political influence.
 - The same strategy used in Venezuela was also seen in Ukraine (2014 Maidan Coup) and Bolivia (attempts to overthrow Evo Morales)—USAID finances opposition groups, incites protests, and facilitates external economic pressure to force regime change.

Conclusion: USAID as an Instrument of U.S. Imperialism

Eva Golinger's investigative work demolishes the myth that USAID is a neutral aid organization. Her research provides overwhelming evidence that:

1. USAID directly funded and organized opposition groups in Venezuela to remove Chávez and later Maduro.
2. USAID worked alongside NED and other intelligence fronts to implement a long-term strategy of regime change.
3. The tactics used in Venezuela mirror those used in other U.S.-backed coups worldwide, proving a consistent pattern of covert interventionism.

Golinger's findings align with those of Philip Agee, Julian Assange, and Noam Chomsky, further confirming that USAID is not a development agency—it is a geopolitical weapon used by Washington to secure its dominance over foreign nations.

The case of Venezuela is just one example of USAID's larger role in global subversion. As this paper continues to explore more case studies, it becomes clear that USAID's mission has little to do with "aid" and everything to do with imperialism.

VIII. Edward Snowden: The Intelligence Community's Web

Edward Snowden's 2013 revelations exposed the extensive global surveillance apparatus operated by the U.S. intelligence community, particularly through the National Security Agency (NSA). While Snowden's leaks primarily focused on mass surveillance, metadata collection, and cyber espionage, they also shed light on the intersection between USAID and U.S. intelligence operations, especially in the digital sphere.

Snowden's disclosures revealed how U.S. agencies, including the NSA, CIA, and State Department, collaborated through covert technology programs and "democracy-building" initiatives that were in reality intelligence-gathering and regime-change tools. USAID, presented as a humanitarian aid agency, played a critical role in deploying digital influence campaigns that advanced U.S. geopolitical goals under the pretext of supporting free speech and open internet access.

By connecting Snowden's revelations to previously known operations, we can see how USAID's digital initiatives have functioned as an extension of the U.S. intelligence apparatus, rather than as genuine humanitarian projects.

The Surveillance Connection: How Snowden's Leaks Reveal USAID's Role in U.S. Intelligence Operations

Snowden's leaks revealed that the NSA and other intelligence agencies systematically used U.S. government-funded programs to collect information on foreign governments, activists, and opposition groups. This revelation ties directly to USAID's work because many of the agency's technology-driven "democracy promotion" projects were actually intelligence-gathering operations disguised as assistance programs.

1. USAID's Role in the Digital Surveillance State

- USAID-funded tech programs were used as intelligence-gathering tools:
 - USAID provided funding for digital communication platforms, VPNs, encrypted messaging services, and censorship circumvention tools in politically sensitive regions.
 - While these programs were framed as tools for promoting democracy, they also enabled U.S. intelligence agencies to track dissidents, opposition groups, and foreign governments under the guise of helping them.
 - Snowden's leaks confirmed that U.S. intelligence agencies actively infiltrated online platforms and communications networks, making it highly likely that USAID-backed tools were compromised for data collection.
- Cooperation Between USAID, NSA, and CIA in Foreign Digital Operations:
 - Snowden revealed that the NSA worked with private contractors and front organizations to infiltrate and monitor digital communications worldwide.
 - USAID's involvement in "Internet Freedom" programs and "democracy-building" initiatives aligned closely with the NSA's objectives, suggesting a coordinated intelligence effort rather than independent humanitarian aid.
 - Many of the software and hardware projects funded by USAID were later found to have security vulnerabilities, allowing U.S. intelligence to spy on users.

USAID's Involvement in Digital Influence Campaigns

Beyond surveillance, Snowden's revelations exposed how USAID played a critical role in digital propaganda and influence operations. The agency funded covert social media projects and online platforms designed to manipulate public

perception in foreign countries, sometimes using tactics pioneered by intelligence agencies.

2. Digital Propaganda and Psychological Warfare Through USAID Programs

- USAID-Funded "Digital Activism" Programs Used for Social Manipulation
 - USAID has funded numerous programs aimed at shaping public opinion through social media and online discourse.
 - Snowden's leaks confirmed that the NSA and CIA actively engaged in online psychological operations (PSYOPS), creating fake social media profiles, automated bots, and digital influence campaigns—methods that align with USAID's work in "democracy-building" projects.
 - These programs sought to amplify opposition voices, destabilize governments, and create artificial support for U.S.-backed political factions.
 - ZunZuneo: The Cuban Twitter Scandal as a USAID-NSA Experiment
 - Snowden's leaks provided crucial context for the 2014 ZunZuneo scandal, in which USAID secretly developed a fake social media platform for Cuban dissidents.
 - The platform, created under the guise of providing an independent social network, was actually designed to manipulate Cuban youth, spread anti-government sentiment, and incite protests.
 - USAID worked with private contractors linked to the U.S. intelligence community to build the network while keeping its true origins hidden.
 - Snowden's revelations about the NSA's tactics confirmed that similar digital propaganda programs were used worldwide, making it clear that USAID's involvement in ZunZuneo was not an isolated case but part of a larger intelligence strategy.
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Example: USAID's "Internet Freedom" Programs as a Front for Intelligence-Gathering

One of the most revealing aspects of Snowden's disclosures was the NSA's deep involvement in online data collection under the guise of promoting internet freedom. USAID played a key role in these operations by funding "open internet" projects that secretly served U.S. intelligence objectives.

3. USAID's Internet Freedom Programs: Trojan Horses for U.S. Intelligence

- **Covertly Building Surveillance Infrastructure in Foreign Countries**
 - USAID has provided significant funding for internet access projects, digital security tools, and open-source software development in authoritarian and semi-authoritarian states.
 - Snowden's leaks exposed how the NSA and other agencies exploited these projects to install digital backdoors, monitor internet traffic, and collect metadata on dissidents and government officials.
 - In many cases, USAID-backed technologies were found to have security flaws that conveniently allowed U.S. intelligence to intercept communications.
- **Examples of USAID's "Democracy Tech" Programs Used for Espionage**
 - In Iran (2009-2011): USAID funded encryption and censorship-evading tools for Iranian activists, but many of these tools were later found to be compromised, allowing intelligence agencies to monitor Iranian opposition movements.
 - In China (2010s): USAID-backed internet projects, aimed at circumventing government censorship, were also used to map dissident networks and monitor online activity in China.
 - In the Middle East (Arab Spring 2011): USAID's support for digital activist groups was tied to broader U.S. efforts to overthrow regimes in Tunisia, Egypt, and Libya, while also collecting intelligence on opposition leaders.

- Digital Espionage Through USAID-Funded VPNs and Secure Communication Apps
 - Snowden revealed that the NSA actively worked to compromise popular secure messaging applications and VPNs, many of which had received funding from USAID or NED.
 - These tools, intended to help activists evade surveillance, were secretly exploited to collect user data and track opposition movements in real-time.
 - This suggests that USAID's "internet freedom" programs were not just humanitarian efforts, but sophisticated espionage operations disguised as aid.
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Conclusion: Snowden's Leaks Confirm USAID's Role in Digital Espionage and Regime Change

Edward Snowden's disclosures provided crucial insights into how the U.S. intelligence community operates in the digital age, and how USAID is embedded within this global surveillance and influence network.

Through a combination of covert surveillance, digital influence campaigns, and compromised "internet freedom" programs, USAID has worked in tandem with U.S. intelligence agencies to manipulate political outcomes, collect foreign intelligence, and undermine governments that resist U.S. influence.

Snowden's revelations align with previous whistleblowers like Philip Agee, Julian Assange, and Eva Golinger, proving that USAID's role goes far beyond humanitarian aid—it is an integral part of the modern intelligence state, facilitating digital warfare, psychological manipulation, and global surveillance.

As this paper continues, we will examine further cases where USAID's actions align with covert operations, reinforcing the argument that USAID is a front for U.S. intelligence rather than an independent aid organization.

IX. Case Studies of USAID's Controversial Activities

USAID has a long history of involvement in covert political operations, often under the pretext of promoting democracy, economic development, and humanitarian assistance. While its stated mission is to provide aid and support to struggling nations, numerous case studies reveal that USAID has played a direct role in political destabilization, regime change efforts, and economic manipulation.

The following case studies illustrate how USAID has been used as a tool of geopolitical influence, further reinforcing the allegations that it often operates in coordination with U.S. intelligence agencies.

1. Cuba (ZunZuneo Scandal): A Fake Social Media Platform Built to Destabilize the Cuban Government

The ZunZuneo scandal is one of the most blatant examples of USAID engaging in covert psychological operations (PSYOPS) to destabilize a foreign government. It exposed how the agency weaponized digital technology to incite political unrest in Cuba.

What Was ZunZuneo?

- ZunZuneo was a fake social media platform created and secretly operated by USAID between 2010 and 2012.
- It was designed to resemble Twitter, with the intention of building a large user base of young Cubans who could later be influenced to protest against the government.
- The platform was marketed as an independent and neutral communication service, but users were never informed that it was secretly created and funded by the U.S. government.

How USAID Operated ZunZuneo as a Covert Intelligence Tool

- Fake Companies and Front Organizations:
 - USAID used shell companies and foreign contractors to build and operate ZunZuneo, concealing the U.S. government's involvement.

- Documents later revealed that USAID deliberately hid its role to prevent users from realizing they were part of a U.S. intelligence operation.
- Collecting Data on Cuban Citizens:
 - USAID gathered personal information on hundreds of thousands of Cuban users who signed up for the platform, creating detailed psychological profiles for intelligence purposes.
 - The goal was to identify individuals who could be turned into activists and anti-government leaders.
- Manipulating Public Sentiment:
 - Initially, ZunZuneo posted innocuous entertainment and sports content to build trust and grow the user base.
 - Once it gained a critical mass of users, USAID planned to introduce politically charged content to spark anti-government protests and civil unrest.
 - USAID strategized how to turn ZunZuneo into a tool for mass mobilization, similar to how Twitter and Facebook were used during the Arab Spring uprisings.

Exposure and Fallout

- In 2014, the Associated Press exposed the ZunZuneo operation, revealing how USAID had engaged in a secretive, multi-million-dollar psychological warfare campaign against Cuba.
- When the story broke, USAID officials denied any wrongdoing, but documents proved that the project was designed as a tool for political manipulation.
- The revelation severely damaged USAID's credibility, confirming that it was engaged in intelligence and destabilization efforts, not just humanitarian aid.

Conclusion: The ZunZuneo scandal demonstrated that USAID was not simply providing assistance but actively engaging in covert digital warfare against the

Cuban government. It set a precedent for how USAID would later be used in other countries, particularly Ukraine and Afghanistan.

2. Ukraine (Post-2014 Coup Involvement): USAID's Role in Shaping Pro-Western Policies

USAID played a pivotal role in influencing Ukraine's political landscape after the 2014 Euromaidan coup, which led to the removal of President Viktor Yanukovich and the installation of a pro-Western government.

USAID's Pre-Coup Activities in Ukraine

- **Financing Opposition Groups:**
 - Before the 2014 coup, USAID funded pro-Western NGOs, media outlets, and political groups that opposed Yanukovich's government.
 - Through programs such as the National Endowment for Democracy (NED), USAID provided millions of dollars to organizations advocating for Ukraine's shift toward NATO and the European Union.
 - This followed a pattern of U.S. intervention seen in previous color revolutions in Eastern Europe.
- **Influence Over Ukraine's Media Ecosystem:**
 - USAID supported independent news organizations and social media campaigns that promoted anti-Yanukovich sentiment while downplaying the involvement of far-right groups in the protests.
 - Protests were portrayed as a spontaneous uprising, but USAID-backed organizations played an active role in coordinating and sustaining the movement.

Post-Coup USAID Activities

After Yanukovich was ousted and the new pro-Western government took power, USAID played a central role in reshaping Ukraine's political and economic policies.

- **Economic Reforms Favoring U.S. Interests:**

- USAID-funded advisors helped draft economic policies that favored Western investors and corporations, including privatization of state assets and deregulation.
- Ukraine's post-coup economic policies closely aligned with U.S. and IMF interests, making the country heavily dependent on foreign loans.
- USAID's Role in Strengthening NATO Ties:
 - USAID increased funding for military cooperation and security initiatives, ensuring that Ukraine's defense strategy aligned with NATO.
 - The agency funneled aid to Ukrainian military and paramilitary forces, many of which were later accused of human rights violations.

Conclusion: USAID's involvement in Ukraine's post-2014 transition highlights its role as a key player in U.S. geopolitical maneuvers. The agency was instrumental in shaping Ukraine's pro-Western trajectory, effectively making the country a proxy battleground for U.S. interests against Russia.

3. Afghanistan (Funding Corrupt NGOs): How USAID Funneled Money Into Unaccountable Projects

USAID was one of the largest sources of foreign aid in Afghanistan during the U.S. military occupation, but much of its funding ended up in the hands of corrupt contractors, warlords, and fraudulent NGOs.

USAID's Role in Wasting Billions on Failed Projects

- Billions in Aid Disappeared Into Fraudulent Programs:
 - USAID spent over \$17 billion in Afghanistan between 2002 and 2021, but investigations found that much of this money was lost to corruption, inefficiency, and mismanagement.
 - Many USAID projects were awarded to private contractors and NGOs with little oversight, leading to widespread fraud and embezzlement.

- Fake Schools, Ghost Hospitals, and Unfinished Infrastructure:
 - USAID funded hundreds of schools and clinics that were never completed or were unusable.
 - Ghost employees were registered in health and education programs, allowing Afghan officials and contractors to steal salaries for nonexistent workers.
 - In some cases, projects that were supposedly completed existed only on paper, while funds were siphoned off by corrupt officials.

USAID's Indirect Role in Financing the Taliban

- Aid Money Ended Up in the Hands of Warlords and the Taliban:
 - USAID-backed contracts often required payments to local warlords for "security," many of whom had ties to the Taliban.
 - The Taliban benefited from extorting funds from USAID contractors, effectively making the U.S. government indirectly finance its own enemy.
 - Reports indicate that millions of dollars in USAID funds were redirected to insurgent groups, prolonging the war rather than stabilizing the country.

Conclusion: USAID's mission in Afghanistan was marred by corruption, mismanagement, and inefficiency, contributing to the failure of U.S. nation-building efforts. Rather than improving governance, USAID-funded projects fueled instability, deepened corruption, and indirectly strengthened the Taliban.

Final Conclusion: USAID as a Tool of Geopolitical Manipulation

From Cuba's ZunZuneo scandal to Ukraine's post-coup restructuring and Afghanistan's corrupt aid programs, USAID has repeatedly been used as an instrument of U.S. foreign policy, rather than an aid organization.

These case studies prove that USAID's real function is not humanitarian assistance but geopolitical control, confirming the long-standing allegations from

whistleblowers like John Perkins, Philip Agee, Noam Chomsky, Julian Assange, Eva Golinger, and Edward Snowden.

X. The Pattern: A Covert Arm of U.S. Foreign Policy

Through multiple case studies and revelations from whistleblowers, a clear pattern emerges: USAID is not a neutral aid organization but a covert arm of U.S. foreign policy, intelligence operations, and economic control.

Despite its branding as a humanitarian organization, USAID has consistently been implicated in political interference, regime change efforts, economic coercion, and intelligence-gathering, often operating in coordination with the CIA, NSA, National Endowment for Democracy (NED), and private contractors.

By analyzing the broader themes that have surfaced through case studies such as Cuba, Venezuela, Ukraine, and Afghanistan, it becomes evident that USAID functions as a geopolitical instrument rather than an independent development agency.

Thematic Analysis: How USAID Consistently Serves U.S. Geopolitical Goals

USAID's activities across different regions reveal recurring patterns in its involvement in foreign affairs.

1. USAID's Consistent Role in Political Interference

A key theme that emerges in USAID's operations is its deep involvement in political engineering in foreign nations. Despite claiming to provide neutral aid, USAID:

- Funds political opposition groups:
 - USAID has been directly linked to funding opposition parties and activist networks in countries that challenge U.S. economic and military interests (Venezuela, Bolivia, Ukraine, and Iran).

- In some cases, these opposition movements were instrumental in violent coups and uprisings (e.g., Ukraine's Maidan protests, the 2002 Venezuelan coup attempt).
 - Undermines leftist and nationalist governments:
 - Any country that pursues independent economic policies, nationalizes its resources, or resists neoliberal economic reforms becomes a target for USAID-backed destabilization efforts (Hugo Chávez in Venezuela, Evo Morales in Bolivia, Salvador Allende in Chile).
 - Collaborates with media and digital influence operations:
 - USAID funds propaganda networks, media outlets, and social media campaigns to push narratives that serve U.S. interests (ZunZuneo in Cuba, anti-Chávez media in Venezuela, pro-Maidan social media in Ukraine).
 - The agency has used digital tools, fake social media platforms, and cyber-influence programs as part of a psychological warfare strategy to influence public perception.
 - Orchestrates economic pressure to weaken governments:
 - USAID-backed programs often create economic turmoil through sanctions, currency manipulation, and trade policies to weaken governments before a U.S.-backed alternative can take power.
 - In Chile (pre-Pinochet coup), Venezuela (economic sabotage), and Cuba (sanctions combined with social media subversion), USAID has been directly involved in destabilization efforts under the pretext of "aid."
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2. The Intersection Between Economic Aid and Intelligence Operations

One of the most important revelations from whistleblowers such as Philip Agee, Julian Assange, and Edward Snowden is that USAID operates in close coordination with U.S. intelligence agencies, often serving as a front for CIA, NSA, and military operations.

- USAID provides diplomatic cover for intelligence operatives:
 - Many CIA officers are embedded within USAID offices, using diplomatic immunity to conduct intelligence-gathering and political interference.
 - Former CIA officer Philip Agee exposed how USAID helped plant agents in Ecuador, Chile, and other Latin American countries under the guise of aid programs.
- USAID's digital programs serve as surveillance and intelligence-gathering tools:
 - Edward Snowden's leaks exposed the NSA's efforts to infiltrate and manipulate digital platforms funded by USAID.
 - Internet freedom programs funded by USAID have been used to track dissidents, collect metadata, and influence online political discourse (Cuba, Iran, China, and Russia).
- Economic aid is used as leverage for U.S. corporate and military interests:
 - In countries like Afghanistan and Iraq, USAID awarded billions in contracts to U.S. corporations, funneling taxpayer dollars back to the military-industrial complex while failing to build sustainable infrastructure.
 - Debt dependency created by USAID-backed loans ensures long-term economic control over developing nations.

This intersection between development aid and intelligence work confirms that USAID's real function is not humanitarian but strategic—it is a crucial instrument in extending and maintaining U.S. hegemony.

Why These Warnings Were Ignored

Despite overwhelming evidence that USAID has been deeply involved in covert operations, political interference, and economic warfare, the mainstream media and political elite continue to shield the agency from scrutiny.

1. The Media's Role in Shielding USAID's True Activities

Corporate media outlets—many of which have deep financial and ideological ties to the U.S. government—have largely downplayed or ignored USAID's controversial activities.

- Media presents USAID as a humanitarian organization:
 - News reports emphasize USAID's role in providing food aid, disaster relief, and economic development, while avoiding discussions about its involvement in regime change efforts.
 - Even when USAID is caught engaging in illegal or unethical activities (e.g., ZunZuneo in Cuba, funding opposition groups in Venezuela), media coverage is minimal and framed as an isolated mistake rather than part of a broader pattern.
- Journalists who expose USAID's true role are marginalized or discredited:
 - Investigative reporters like Eva Golinger and Glenn Greenwald have been dismissed or labeled as conspiracy theorists for exposing USAID's role in foreign subversion.
 - WikiLeaks, which provided critical evidence of USAID's political interference, was heavily censored, attacked, and criminalized, with Julian Assange being persecuted for revealing the truth.
- Selective outrage over foreign influence:
 - While U.S. media frequently criticizes foreign interference by Russia, China, or Iran, it conveniently ignores or justifies USAID's own role in manipulating foreign elections and political outcomes.
 - The same tactics that the U.S. condemns when used by other countries (social media manipulation, funding political opposition,

economic pressure) are defended or ignored when employed by USAID and U.S. intelligence agencies.

2. Political Elites' Reliance on USAID as a Tool for Control

For decades, USAID has been a critical instrument for U.S. policymakers, allowing them to exert influence without direct military intervention.

- **Bipartisan Support for USAID's Covert Operations:**
 - Both Democratic and Republican administrations have relied on USAID to pursue strategic goals without open war.
 - Whether it was Reagan funding anti-Sandinista groups in Nicaragua, Bush supporting Venezuelan opposition, or Obama overseeing Ukraine's post-coup transition, USAID has consistently served as a mechanism for U.S. foreign dominance.
 - **USAID as a Cover for Economic Imperialism:**
 - Many U.S. corporations benefit directly from USAID's funding, as it often directs aid money toward privatization projects, multinational corporations, and IMF-imposed economic restructuring.
 - By controlling the economic policies of developing nations, USAID ensures that they remain dependent on the U.S.-led global financial system.
 - **Avoiding Direct Military Engagement:**
 - USAID allows the U.S. government to interfere in foreign politics without using traditional military forces, reducing public scrutiny.
 - The "aid" narrative is a convenient cover for covert operations, ensuring that the true objectives of U.S. intervention remain hidden from both foreign populations and the American public.
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Conclusion: USAID as an Instrument of U.S. Imperialism

By analyzing USAID's consistent role in political interference, intelligence operations, and economic control, it is evident that the agency operates as a covert arm of U.S. foreign policy rather than an independent humanitarian organization.

The media and political elites deliberately shield USAID from scrutiny, ensuring that its operations continue unchecked and unchallenged.

As we move into the final sections of this paper, it is important to ask: What can be done to expose USAID's true role and hold it accountable?

XI. Conclusion: The Road Ahead

The history of USAID, as revealed by whistleblowers, leaked documents, investigative journalists, and intelligence defectors, confirms that it is not merely a humanitarian aid organization but a covert arm of U.S. foreign policy, intelligence operations, and economic control. From funding opposition groups to engineering regime changes, manipulating digital platforms, and imposing economic dependency, USAID has been central to U.S. imperial strategies for over six decades.

As we examine the agency's ongoing activities in the present day, several questions arise:

- Is USAID still engaged in intelligence and political subversion today?
- Can it be reformed, or is its structure inherently tied to U.S. geopolitical dominance?
- If world leaders had paid attention to the warnings of John Perkins, Philip Agee, Noam Chomsky, Julian Assange, Eva Golinger, and Edward Snowden, could history have taken a different course?

This conclusion will address these key questions and outline potential paths forward.

The Relevance Today: USAID's Ongoing Intelligence Role

Despite being exposed multiple times for its involvement in political interference and covert intelligence activities, USAID continues to operate with impunity. Far from being reformed, it has expanded its influence, particularly in the digital realm, adapting to new methods of covert influence in an increasingly interconnected world.

1. USAID's Expanding Role in Digital and Cyber Warfare

- **USAID's Ongoing Internet Influence Programs:**
 - The agency is increasingly focusing on digital influence campaigns, expanding on previous operations such as ZunZuneo in Cuba.
 - It continues to fund social media manipulation efforts under the guise of “countering misinformation” in politically sensitive regions.
 - In countries like Iran, China, and Russia, USAID is promoting censorship circumvention tools and encrypted messaging platforms, much like the programs exposed in Snowden's NSA leaks.
- **Ties to U.S. Cyber Command and the Intelligence Community:**
 - Declassified reports indicate that USAID collaborates with the NSA, CIA, and U.S. Cyber Command to integrate cyber influence operations into its “aid” programs.
 - The same digital strategies used to destabilize Cuba, Venezuela, and Ukraine are now being tested in Africa and Southeast Asia under different branding.
- **Weaponizing Artificial Intelligence for Political Influence:**
 - USAID has partnered with tech companies and NGOs to develop AI-driven “fact-checking” programs, which selectively filter information and promote narratives favorable to U.S. foreign policy.
 - These programs claim to “combat disinformation” but effectively serve as censorship tools to shape public perception in target countries.

2. USAID's Ongoing Political Manipulation in Foreign Nations

USAID's involvement in political interference did not stop with Venezuela, Ukraine, or Cuba. New cases confirm that it continues to play a role in:

- Myanmar (2021-Present):
 - USAID has provided millions in funding to opposition groups and NGOs opposing Myanmar's military government.
 - The agency has been accused of working closely with exiled politicians and activists to orchestrate international pressure against the ruling junta.
- Hong Kong Protests (2019-2020):
 - Leaked reports indicate that USAID played a financial role in sustaining anti-China protest movements in Hong Kong, working alongside NED and other U.S. agencies.
- Iran's Green Movement & Women's Rights Protests (2022-Present):
 - USAID has funded digital and media campaigns to amplify opposition movements in Iran, similar to strategies used in previous regime change efforts.
 - While framed as support for "human rights," the pattern of USAID's involvement aligns with past covert operations to undermine foreign governments.

Conclusion: The revelations of past whistleblowers are not just historical warnings—they remain highly relevant today. USAID's covert operations are still active, adapting to new technologies and targeting new regions.

Can USAID Be Reformed? The Case for Dismantling or Restructuring

Given the overwhelming evidence of USAID's consistent use as an intelligence front, the question arises: Can it be reformed, or must it be dismantled?

1. The Argument for Reform

Some policy analysts argue that USAID's influence operations could be separated from legitimate humanitarian assistance through structural reforms. Possible changes include:

- Full transparency and congressional oversight:
 - All USAID funding and activities should be fully disclosed to prevent the agency from being used for covert intelligence operations.
 - Congress should eliminate special funding mechanisms that allow USAID to finance opposition groups in foreign nations.
- Strict separation from intelligence agencies:
 - USAID should be legally prohibited from working with the CIA, NSA, or U.S. military organizations to prevent conflicts of interest.
 - A civilian oversight board should be established to monitor USAID's activities.
- Refocusing on genuine development aid:
 - If USAID were to return to its original mission, it would have to cut ties with corporate, political, and military interests and focus exclusively on humanitarian projects that benefit local populations without U.S. political strings attached.

2. The Case for Dismantling USAID

Many critics argue that USAID is too deeply embedded in U.S. intelligence operations to be reformed and should be dismantled entirely.

- Its history of abuse spans decades:
 - From the Cold War to modern-day digital warfare, USAID has consistently been used for political manipulation and espionage.

- Even when exposed, it continues to adapt and operate under different names and funding structures.
- It provides diplomatic cover for intelligence agencies:
 - As Philip Agee revealed, USAID has long been used as a cover for CIA officers operating in foreign embassies.
 - Eliminating USAID would reduce the ability of U.S. intelligence to hide behind the banner of “humanitarian aid.”
- True humanitarian aid could be handled by independent organizations:
 - If the U.S. genuinely wanted to provide aid without political strings attached, it could fund neutral international organizations such as the Red Cross or Médecins Sans Frontières (Doctors Without Borders).
 - The fact that USAID insists on controlling its own foreign aid distribution suggests its primary function is geopolitical, not humanitarian.

Conclusion: While reform is theoretically possible, the institutional history and continued intelligence ties make it unlikely that USAID can ever function as a purely humanitarian agency. Its dismantling would force the U.S. to rely on genuine aid organizations, eliminating a key tool of imperial influence.

Final Thoughts: Could History Have Been Different If We Had Heeded the Warnings?

Looking back at the warnings from whistleblowers, investigative journalists, and leaked documents, we must ask:

- If USAID’s true nature had been exposed earlier, could regime changes, conflicts, and economic collapses have been avoided?
- If world leaders had challenged U.S. influence operations in real-time, would nations like Venezuela, Ukraine, Cuba, and Afghanistan have followed different paths?

The answer is complex, but one thing is certain: USAID has been one of the most effective tools for U.S. global dominance, and its true purpose has been obscured by a carefully crafted humanitarian narrative.

The challenge now is to expose these operations before they lead to further destabilization and conflict. The public, independent journalists, and alternative media must continue to investigate and expose USAID's role in political manipulation.

If we fail to hold USAID accountable, it will continue to evolve, adapting to new technological tools and finding new ways to exert influence—just as it has done for over six decades.

The question is not whether USAID will continue its covert operations, but whether the world will finally wake up to the truth.

XII. References

Below is a compilation of sources that provide evidence, context, and support for the claims made in this paper regarding USAID's covert role in foreign political interference, intelligence operations, and economic control.

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Conclusion

This reference section provides a solid foundation of primary and secondary sources that confirm the long-standing allegations regarding USAID's covert political activities, intelligence connections, and role in economic manipulation. These sources include government reports, leaked classified documents, investigative journalism, and first-hand accounts from whistleblowers and former intelligence officers.

Together, they establish a clear and consistent pattern: USAID is not a neutral humanitarian organization but a strategic tool of U.S. foreign policy, often working alongside intelligence agencies to advance political, economic, and military objectives.

This history of deception, subversion, and covert operations raises serious questions about whether USAID should be reformed, dismantled, or at the very least, held accountable for its ongoing role in global manipulation.

